

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 111189

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (BANDA, H. KAMUZU), PDIP, MI, US

SUBJECT: BANDA VISIT

1. PRESIDENT BANDA IS CURRENTLY IN NASHVILLE, WHERE HE IS GUEST OF CITY AND MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE.

2. ON HIS ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON APRIL 27, BANDA WAS MET BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE, A SIZEABLE CONTINGENT FROM THE AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND MARY DOUGHERTY HEADING DELEGATION FROM NANBPW. NO US PRESS IN EVIDENCE. MOOSE ACCOMPANIED BANDA TO HOTEL.

3. WE WERE UNSUCCESSFUL IN ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS WITH EITHER THE PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT, BUT THE SECRETARY CALLED ON PRESIDENT BANDA FOR 45 MINUTES IN HIS HOTEL SUITE 4/28. DISCUSSION CENTERED ALMOST ENTIRELY ON RHODESIA (SEPTTEL).

4. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, PRESIDENT BANDA HAD ONLY A LIMITED SCHEDULE OF OTHER APPOINTMENTS DURING WASHINGTON STAY. CONGRESSMAN DIGGS CALLED ON HIM FOR APPROXIMATELY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 111189

AN HOUR, AND HE ALSO RECEIVED ROBERT MCNAMARA OF WORLD BANK.

5. ON APRIL 26, DESKOFF AND JOHN NGWIRI CALLED ON SENATOR BAYH'S STAFF CONCERNING MBISA CASE. NGWIRI HAD EARLIER TOLD DESKOFF THAT WHILE GOM WAS UNWILLING TO PROVIDE WRITTEN REPORT ON THE CASE, HE AND PRESIDENT

BANDA HAD AGREED THAT IF INQUIRER IN INDIANA STILL UNSATISFIED, NGWIRI SHOULD GO TO BLOOMINGTON IN ADVANCE OF PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL, MEET WITH INQUIRER AND SEEK TO CLARIFY.

6. ACCOUNT WHICH NGWIRI GAVE TO DESKOFF AND BAYH STAFF BASICALLY TRACKED WITH THAT GIVEN AMBASSADOR BY TEMBO. HOWEVER, NGWIRI SAID THAT MBISA WAS TOLD AT FIRST MEETING WITH SPECIAL BRANCH FEBRUARY 6 THAT HE HAD NOTHING TO FEAR AS RESULT OF LETTER. NGWIRI ALSO DENIED THAT A SECOND SPECIAL BRANCH MEETING WITH MBISA WAS EITHER SCHEDULED OR PLANNED. BAYH STAFF APPEARED TO ACCEPT NGWIRI'S ACCOUNT, AND WERE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED BY HIS WILLINGNESS TO SIT DOWN AND EXPLAIN THE CASE. SAME, UNFORTUNATELY, CANNOT BE SAID FOR BLOOMINGTON INQUIRER. WHEN BAYH STAFF DISCUSSED CASE WITH HER FOLLOWING DAY, SHE DISMISSED NGWIRI'S VERSION AS "NOTHING BUT WHAT YOU WOULD EXPECT FROM OFFICIAL ACCOUNT." SHE ALSO REJECTED IDEA OF HAVING NGWIRI COME TO BLOOMINGTON TO MEET WITH HER. AT SAME TIME, SHE DID NOT MAKE EXPLICIT CHARGE OF FOUL PLAY, AND DENIED ANY INTENTION TO DEMONSTRATE OR OTHERWISE MAKE ANY ACCUSATIONS PUBLIC.

7. MEANWHILE, ON APRIL 26 GROUP OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS AT INDIANA PUBLICLY PROTESTED UNIVERSITY'S INTENTION TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 111189

AWARD DEGREE TO PRESIDENT BANDA, ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS. DRAWING FROM TWO-YEAR OLD AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT AND OTHER SOURCES, PROTESTERS FOCUSED ON POLITICAL DETENTIONS AND JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES.

8. DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF HONORARY DEGREE PROGRAM. DEPARTMENT HAS SUPPLIED TEXT OF LATEST UNCLASSIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AS SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS, FOR WHATEVER USE UNIVERSITY MIGHT WISH TO MAKE OF IT, BUT OTHERWISE PLANS TO AVOID ANY OVERT ROLE. UNIVERSITY IS INCLINED TO DOWNPLAY IMPORTANCE OF PROTEST, AND IS NOT CONSIDERING WITHDRAWING OFFER OF DEGREE. AMBASSADOR MUWAMBA AND JOHN NGWIRI HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF SITUATION, INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF DEMONSTRATION, BUT DO NOT SEEM OVERLY CONCERNED. VANCE

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